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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Tel Aviv Bureau

FROM:	EXTENSION	NO
Chief, Operations Group	3-5991	DATE October 1988

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE RECEIVED	DATE FORWARDED	OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
1. C/MOD				
2.				
3. C/ESG				
4.				
5. C/FED				
6.				
7. C/ADD				
8.				
9. C/HED				
10.				
11. C/Computer Operations				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15. Retain/Destroy				

FORM 1-79 **610** USE PREVIOUS EDITIONS

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FBIS-6050-88
1 November 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Tel Aviv Bureau -- October 1988

I. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The bureau remained open late on the 19th to cover a special late-night newsreel broadcast by Jerusalem radio on the suicide car bomb attack against an IDF convoy in the security strip which killed seven IDF soldiers outright and another who died later of his wounds.

2. THE NATION, a new Tel Aviv English-language weekly, which prompted official reactions in Washington and Seoul with its reports of U.S.-Iranian talks and arms deals involving a Korean connection, became a daily on the 24th due to "popular demand."

B. Communications

Upwards of 70 hours of lengthy total outages and many 15-25 minute outages of various types made October a difficult month for communications, keeping duty editors guessing on when to go to altroutes and even which one to use. [redacted] offers the hope that the several-hour satellite maintenance outage at [redacted] on the 29th has corrected some, if not all, the causes of the problem. STAT STAT

C. Lateral Services

1. After nearly 10 months of filing items on Arab-Israeli issues at dual priority/routine precedence or higher because of the unrest in the territories, the bureau asked the BBC Newsroom, through London Bureau, to reevaluate its needs and to accept less general criteria for high-precedence filing. The Newsroom agreed that Tel Aviv could stand down from what had become blanket high-precedence filing of unrest-related material.

2. The bureau pouched a videotape of the 23 October Shamir-Peres election debate to headquarters at the request of a Washington consumer.

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D. Technical

1. After numerous delays, the installation of the bureau's 3.1-meter TVRO satellite dish is under way. The latest revision of our hopes for completion anticipates the beginning of dish operations by mid November.

2. The bureau installed a fax machine on the 31st which will be used primarily for transmitting Turkish and West Bank Arabic press materials when Nicosia and Tel Aviv provide backstop or coverage assistance to each other for those sources.

II. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. The embassy has requested State Department approval of a 4.5 percent cost-of-living increase to be applied to FSN base pay effective 1 October. The increase is based on a 13 September agreement between the primary Israeli employer organization and the confederation of trade unions, and was approved by the Israeli Government.

2. Communications operators [redacted] STAT
[redacted] STAT
notified the bureau of their intention to resign effective 5 November. The bureau began a recruiting effort but was forced to request 6 weeks of TDY help from Nicosia bureau pending the hiring and training of replacements.

3. After receiving nearly two hundred applications and interviewing and testing fifty applicants, the bureau selected a candidate to fill a vacant Hebrew monitor position. With medical and security clearances already completed, the new monitor is expected to EOD early in November.

4. Deputy Chief [redacted] participated in a STAT
management training course [redacted] from the 18th STAT
to the 21st.

B. Building and Grounds

As part of the mission's current safety awareness drive, the bureau implemented its newly revised emergency SOP on the 26th with a fire drill. Leaving the duty editor behind in order not to close down the bureau during the evacuation, safety officer [redacted] ushered on-duty personnel down the stairway, STAT
all 15 floors. At the bureau chief's request, elevators were used on the return trip.

III. VISITS

A. Deputy chief of operations [redacted] paid a STAT
management visit to the bureau from the 4th to the 7th.

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B. Nicosia Bureau cruising monitor [redacted] STAT arrived on the 27th to assist the staff cruiser with a week-long cruising survey of Moscow fall/winter schedule and frequency changes.

C. Also from Nicosia Bureau, communications operator [redacted] STAT arrived on the 31st to provide TDY assistance in the Communications Section.

D. Vienna Bureau Hungarian monitor [redacted] STAT visited the bureau on the 24th while on private travel in Israel.

IV. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

A. Although the threat to embassy personnel is considered minimal, the embassy health unit participated in the nationwide campaign of polio immunization in response to an outbreak of the disease in several Israeli towns. Both American and local staff were also vaccinated against meningitis after a warning was issued about a likely outbreak in the Middle East this winter.

B. Bureau employees [redacted] STAT attended the embassy's newcomers orientation, which included a trip to the Jewish quarter and the Consulate General in Jerusalem. During the Tel Aviv portion of the orientation, the bureau chief briefed the group on FBIS operations. Editorial trainee [redacted] STAT also attended the orientation.

C. [redacted] wife of staff cruiser [redacted] STAT has been appointed chairperson of the American Embassy Womens Group Outreach Committee. The objective of the committee is to determine how best to distribute the group's resources to local social service facilities.

[redacted] STAT

Chief, Tel Aviv Bureau

cc: JN, NC

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